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THE
NAZARENE
PREACHER

DECEMBER 1968

ESSENTIALS IN EVANGELISM

General Superintendent Coulter

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The Editor

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"BEARING WITNESS TO THE TRUTH"

W. T. Purkiser

Library
Oliver Nazarene College
BARRAN, ILL.

—proclaiming Christian Holiness



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RICHARD S. TAYLOR

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Essentials in Evangelism

By General Superintendent Coulter

BIBLE PREACHERS have two essential responsibilities in evangelism—to proclaim and to appeal.

Some preachers have emphasized one and neglected the other. Both must be performed faithfully. Both must be kept in balance. To expect results without both of these essential elements is utmost folly.

New Testament records of effective preaching reveal the combination of those two essentials. Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost was a proclamation of the sinless life, the sacrificial death, and the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. But it also contained a challenging summons to "repent . . . for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Paul declared, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself . . . Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:19-20). Both Peter and Paul recognized the necessity of the proclamation of God's remedy for man's sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But they did not stop there. They also issued an earnest and compassionate appeal to their hearers to accept the remedy provided.

To proclaim effectively, a preacher must have a knowledge of the truths of the gospel. He must know what God has done through Christ to redeem man from his lostness. This knowledge must be biblical and clear-cut. Obscure statements can only lead to confusion. We are told that we do not understand anything until we can explain it without recourse to jargon. Good preaching should make the truths of God's Word clear and intelligible.

But proclamation is not enough. There must be appeal as well. "It is not enough to teach men the gospel; we must urge them to embrace it."

Preaching like this is costly and demanding. It involves courage to declare the whole counsel of God, but it also involves a compassionate love to persuade men to accept Christ. This kind of preaching can never be done in the calm, detached manner of the classroom, but must involve the most fervent personal appeal.

Proclamation alone tends to stiffness and formality. Appeal alone tends to superficiality and emotionalism. True evangelistic preaching must have content before enlightenment and conviction can come to sinners. The hearer must be able to grasp the truth before his will can respond to it.

May God help us all to find that happy blending of true biblical proclamation of the gospel with that warm, loving appeal of concern that will result in sinners being converted and believers being sanctified.

.....From the.....EDITOR

Shepherding the Children at Christmastime

SOME PREACHERS want a “quickie” ministry and their vision does not extend much beyond a year. Others aim at an enduring ministry, and work at programs which they know will not fully flower for five or 10 years. Such a long-range plan, if wisely developed, will include generous time with the children. There is no stronger congregation of Christians than young adults whom the pastor himself has nurtured from childhood.

But to achieve this requires much more than “fun” times with the children. It also means much more than a well-organized church schools department which others run, while the pastor remains a guiding and unseen spirit in the background. Children are not overly fond of spirits. A pastor who would hold children must not try to escape them, but expose himself to them, at the various levels of pastoral relationship, in the home, at Sunday school, in VBS, in preaching—and surely also during the Christmas season, yes, even at practice time!

But if good rather than irreparable harm is to be done, let it be the exposure of a true minister, rather than a clown, a hobo, or a grouch. A pastor can nullify his spiritual influence over children by “losing his cool” in their presence, no matter how trying they may be. He equally damages his image by discarding all semblance of dignity, as the man of God in their midst. To dress like a “hick” (even on a hike) may foster familiarity, but familiarity alone may be of only passing value; in fact, it may be a positive disvalue unless accompanied by respect for him as a man of God, and for his position as pastor of the church.

Wherever the church children are—especially at a church activity—there the pastor should be, not as another child, but as their pastor, dressed like a professional man, conducting himself always with dignity and decorum. The occasions suitable for playing with them should be no exception as far as basic conduct is concerned. And especially should there be no exception either in conduct or dress when activities are in the church. If children do not venerate their pastor, with some degree of respectful deference, they will not reverence the house of God. And what is more to the point—their conduct in the house of God is not apt to be an improvement on his!

It is not playing the buffoon that will grapple the children to him, but his kindness, his smile, the ever ready interest he shows in them as people. This is no plea for stuffed-shirt standoffishness, nursing one’s dignity like a prig, completely lacking in humor and amiability. But we are insisting that it is vitally important that children love him, not just as a “good guy,” but as the pastor, and that there shall be something in his conduct which will invest

his office with an aura of holiness. Children will sense this even when they cannot define it. They want both to love and reverence their preacher; they want to come with their questions and confidences, yet feel that awe which belongs to God. Because of this natural bent they are keenly aware of their pastor's presence (or absence), and also of his general bearing. Their conclusions may be wrong, as in the case of the little boy looking all over for his pastor on a "workday" at the church who finally in plaintive, hurt tones said, "I guess Brother K—— just doesn't want to work for the Lord." But even wrong conclusions may reflect right intuitions.

But I mustn't spend so much time in generalities that I fail to emphasize that the Christmas season is above all the best time for the pastor to be a true shepherd to the little ones. His interest in every participant, down to the smallest lisper in the Christmas program, should be genuine and obvious. And with what prayerful carefulness he should utilize this exciting time for religious instruction! No sermon should ignore the children. Even children can be told the rudiments of the Incarnation event. Don't dodge their questions. Give them honest, straightforward answers. "What's a 'virgin'?" asked a little girl, and when she was told, "An unmarried woman," she knit her brow a moment and then said, "I thought only married people had children." In that moment she was struggling with a theological problem, and was entitled to a right theological answer, straight from the Bible. What is more, when is a better time to teach children the greater blessedness of giving, of compassion for the unfortunate, and of the love of God? But even more important, when is a better time to tell children that the Babe grew up to become their Savior on the Cross, and to lead them to make of themselves a Christmas gift to Him who was God's "unspeakable gift" to them?

Step One in Building That Church

NO MATTER HOW MUCH a church building costs or how clever the architect, it is a "thoughtless" project if its design is not governed by the principles discussed in W. T. Purkiser's article in this issue. The article is an abridgment of the keynote address given by Dr. Purkiser at the Quadrennial Conference on Church Building and Architecture last June, and rates very careful study. It is naive to expect non-Nazarene architects to design to meet Nazarene needs, when in most cases they don't even know what those needs are. If the pastor is capable of leading in a building program at all, he is capable of mastering the theological principles which should direct the project. Let this be his first task. Otherwise he may be guilty, even though unintentionally, of betraying his church, and risking the defeat of his ultimate purpose, by a plant that is not suited to a Nazarene program, in either education, worship, or evangelism.

Christmas treasures
that time cannot tarnish

Songs of the Star and Stable*

By Thomas K. Zehr

HOW MANY Christmas hymns and carols can you sing? Do you as a family or as a church have a limited repertoire? When you have sung "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "Silent Night," "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," and "Joy to the World," do you have to start over again?

It seems that we are unenlightened about some very useful hymns that have come to us through the Scandinavian and German hymnists. Perhaps an exception to this would be "Away in a Manger," which you have known since childhood. Commonly attributed to Martin Luther, it is a heartwarming lullaby spoken in the language of a child. Not so well-known is the splendid nativity hymn of Luther's beginning

*Good news from heaven the angels
bring;
Glad tidings to the earth they sing:
To us this day a Child is given,
To crown us with the joy of heaven.*

The "father of congregational singing" goes from this first stanza to ask, "What thanks shall I return to Thee?" He concludes that the earth itself would be too poor to be a "narrow cradle" for the Lord. Instead, he will give himself:

*Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.*

The tune for this text, known as *Vom himmel hoch*, was borrowed from a well-known secular melody of Luther's time.

Clement, an early leader of the Church, admonished the priests: "Brethren, keep diligently the feast days and above all the day of Christ's birth." Christmas has been celebrated since very early in the life of the Church, and from early times the singing of hymns and carols has been associated with this season. From the "Gloria in Excelsis" of the day through the Christmas hymns of the Reformation to our present carols and songs, Christmas has been a time for the outburst of joyous music.

*Reprinted from *Emphasis*, December, 1967.
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Although the first-known Christmas carols were not Anglicized until 12 centuries after the birth of Christ, the first printed collection was not published until 1521. Telephorus, bishop of Rome in 129, is credited with the inauguration of carol singing as a celebration of the birth of Christ. Others have named St. Francis of Assisi as the originator of the modern custom of carol singing in Italy during the thirteenth century. It soon spread over Europe. Today no Christmas service is complete without the singing of Christmas anthems, hymns, and carols.

An understanding of the political and religious climate through the last several centuries will give you a new appreciation of the types and styles of Christmas music.

The fifteenth century was the great age of the English Christmas carol—carols were simple, fervent, and full of fun. With the Reformation and the growth of Puritanism, carols became gloomier. By 1647 the Puritan Parliament had abolished the observance of Christmas and had forbidden any form of celebration. Carols were out; so were organs!

Puritanism brought anti-Christmas feeling to New England with the "Mayflower." As early as 1621, Governor Bradford rebuked "certain lusty young men" for celebrating the holiday. In 1659 the General Court of Massachusetts decreed that anybody observing Christmas Day should be fined five shillings.

The restoration of English royalty in 1660 brought about the reinstatement of the carol, but it was not until 1681 that Massachusetts repealed its 1659 ordinance.

Many early carols were lost until nineteenth-century researchers restored them. Some were even brought to light in the woods of New

England and the mountains of the American South. Of all the carols that have come down to us from the past, one of the most enduring in popularity begins:

*God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
Was born upon this day.*

Dickens, in his *A Christmas Carol*, puts this old carol into the mouth of Scrooge's unlucky caller on Christmas Eve. It is sung in England today by choruses of men and boys on their Christmas Eve rounds, and by Americans gathered at fireplaces and altars.

A broken church organ was responsible for the most popular of the more recent carols—"Silent Night, Holy Night." Christmas, 1818, was near, and the organ in the little Austrian church was not yet repaired. So Father Josef Mohr sat down and wrote the carol. At his Christmas midnight service he sang it to music by organist Franz Gruber, who played it on a guitar.

One type of Christmas carol common the world over is the call to neighbors to wake up and visit the lovely Baby born in a stable. The spirit of these carols is caught in the American Negro lament, "Sweet Little Jesus Boy."

Regardless of the form it takes, music is one of the greatest tributes to Christmas.

It is surprising that so little error and unbridled imagination have crept in when one thinks how prolific men have been in the production of hymns and carols in praise of Christ's miraculous birth. Every facet of the event has been covered in some way.

The prophecy concerning the Christ to be born of a virgin in Bethlehem is sung about repeatedly. Charles Wesley takes up the thought in "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing."

*Late in time, behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see.
Hail the incarnate Deity!*

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (II Cor. 5:19). The Babe was the promised Messiah for whom the world had longed. Jesus is "our Immanuel," "Prince of Peace," "sun of righteousness." No wonder all creation shouts with praise!

Also in song, we find the Word (as revealed in John 1) brought into focus in a manner that the apostle himself would have rejoiced to sing. "O Come, All Ye Faithful" speaks of Bethlehem, the angels' choir, and their song, but also of John's reference to the Word made flesh: "Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!"

Nothing can compare in sheer joy and unrestrained praise with Watts's "Joy to the World!" It admonishes all creation to rejoice that sin, sorrow, thorns, and curse shall forever be banished.

The events surrounding the Nativity are condensed for the sake of clarity and brevity in "Angels, from the Realms of Glory." In this hymn we are also admonished to "come and worship Christ, the newborn King!"

There is little doubt that "We Three Kings of Orient Are" captures the spirit of that strange caravan from the East. The delineation of the gifts reminds us of who Christ is—"King and God and Sacrifice." This song does not try to name the wise men. Nor does it attribute to them deeds and words never mentioned in the Bible.

"What Child Is This?" simply sings of "the Word made flesh" to bear a cross and to teach us humility in His lowly birth. "It Came upon the Midnight Clear," written by an American, carries an intent not found in

most English carols. It gives us the quiet contrast of the sacred event with the raucous babel of the world. It holds out hope for the weary world, however. There is peace. The message of this song is that one glorious day peace will cover the earth,

*And the whole world give back
the song*

Which now the angels sing.

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" is another American carol with the message of "peace . . . on earth." It also brings to our attention "how silently" and unobtrusively God assumes the form of man. It reaches its quiet climax with a plaintive invitation to the holy Child of Bethlehem to

*Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today!*

The story of the shepherds is faithfully and effectively told in "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks." This carol is filled with biblical account of the Nativity. In this sense, it may well be the ideal Christmas song.

The sheer delight of the Bible's "Glory to God in the Highest" is beautifully expressed in "Angels We Have Heard on High." The quiet contemplation of that holy day is brought out forcefully in "Silent Night." This encompasses the gamut of events concerning Christ's birth.

These hymns and others like them can help to enrich the intellectual and emotional understanding of the Christmas observance. Remember that hymns are not good just because they are old, nor are they bad for that reason either! The unfamiliar fill a large need and should be used to supplement our present meager fare.

Christmas should be more than one brief outburst of joyful song. Let us see that we don't have the same cramped outburst every year.

When dust is on the
pastor's desk it will
probably be on the church pews too

The Minister

By Carl N. Hall*

Part II Persistent in His Training

The minister's study has fallen into the background, and the minister's office is the place in which he is expected to do his work. Ministers today live under the pressure of many demands upon their time. This has been called the "maceration of the minister." A survey questionnaire revealed that 153 out of 223 pastors considered lack of sufficient preparation time their chief problem.

Many a man of brilliant gifts brings little to pass because he spreads himself too thin. A man once set out to cook his dinner in prairie country. He started a fire and set his coffeepot over it. He then put some bacon in a frying pan and held it over the fire alongside the coffeepot. Presently the grass caught fire, and he began following it up, holding his frying pan over the highest blaze at the moment, but by the time his bacon was fried, he was a quarter of a mile from his coffeepot. If a preacher permits himself to be lured too far from his study too often, he will be in deep trouble. For if God's man fails to study, he

will become an echo instead of a "voice." However much the administrative demands increase upon the modern minister, he must determine, above all else, to be a servant of the Word. "No man can maintain the strain of ministry unless he is constantly taking in reserves of spiritual sustenance for himself," declared Ralph G. Turnbull. Even if one does not have a sermon taster par excellence in his congregation, there is at least a chance of reducing the number of sleepers on any given Sunday morning when one speaks with the urgency of having discovered fresh truths.

Many clergymen mistake sputter for speed and execution, and fail to discipline themselves. That man has woefully shortchanged himself who sees clearly the implications of the stewardship of money but who has never caught a vision of the stewardship of time. The pastor, like everyone else, has all the time there is, so he has no cause to complain. He has *enough* time—let us put it that way. We all have more time than we use

*Pastor, First Church, Clearwater, Fla.

profitably. We have need not so much of more time, as of redeeming the time we do possess.

Phillips Brooks describes the disorganized, lazy preacher in words that sting:

His work is at loose ends; he treats his people with a neglect with which no doctor could treat his patients and no lawyer his clients; and he writes his sermons on Saturday nights. That last I count the crowning disgrace of a man's ministry. It is dishonest. It is giving but the last flicker of the week as it sinks in its socket, to those who, simply to talk about it as a bargain, have paid for the full light burning at its brightest. And yet men boast of it. They tell you in how short time they prepare their sermons, and when you hear them preach you only wonder that it took so long (*Lectures on Preaching*, p. 100).

Probably one reason many ministers stay busy is to still the alarm of conscience and put off the day when they must reckon with their undisciplined lives. Sometimes we try to still this alarm by the "anesthesia of activity." Says Gene E. Bartlett:

In all honesty, how much of our activity is imposed and how much is chosen? To what degree are we impelled from within and to what degree are we compelled from without? . . . For an impressive portion of our activity seems self-chosen . . . For it is easier to promote than to pray. It is easier to be in one's office than in his study. It often is easier to serve on a committee than to face the question of one's real commitment. It may be difficult to raise a budget, but it is infinitely more difficult to raise a spirit which has been crushed by the circumstances of life (*The Audacity of Preaching*, p. 131).*

The peripheral is easier than the essential, and the servant of the Lord

must come to terms with the tendency to turn to the easier against the more demanding aspects of his work.

Study is one of the most demanding parts of any man's ministry. Moreover there will never be a time when a man can study because nothing else is required of him at that moment. He comes to his study because he has made a *choice*, a definite decision, a deliberate reservation of that time at the cost of ruling out some other demands.

One must keep his study hours free from all but emergency interruptions. But what of that blessed curse, the telephone? One pastor designated one room at the church as his office and another room as his study. When he wished to be undisturbed, he went into the study. Telephone inquiries were then handled by the secretary: "I am sorry, Dr. B—— is not in his office now. May I take a message?" Was this justifiable? Let each man work out his own salvation and be fully persuaded in his own mind! Surely it is possible for a pastor just as he states his office hours to state his study hours also. If the pastor will make up his mind first, and then, in a quiet but consistent way, become educator of the congregation to whom he preaches, the contemporary minister can keep his study times and thus help fill the reservoir from which the water of life must flow.

One word concerning books. The preacher must not succumb to the "tyranny of books," but books are his friends. Bishop Quayle exalted them as "the juices squeezed from the cluster of the ages." Too many preachers have a first-class automobile and a fourth-class library. Better to have books than beautiful neckties or golf shoes, if a choice must be made.

(To be continued)

*New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962. Used with permission.

"We don't meet competition;
we make it"

Sunday Night Evangelism

By R. E. Maner*

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH in Atlanta, Ga., has large crowds and good services on Sunday night. But this has not always been the case. Years ago, when Dr. Pierce Harris first came as pastor, they did not even have a Sunday night service. Nor did they want such a service. But something happened that changed the picture. Dr. Harris tried again and again without success to start a Sunday night service. One Sunday night a young woman came walking down Peachtree Street. She stopped in front of the dark entrance to the church; all was quiet and empty inside. The next morning they found her body—gun still in hand—inside the entrance to the church. Her suitcase stood there beside the lifeless body. A lonely, despondent girl looking for help had come to the church and found it closed when it should have been open.

That did it. Dr. Harris says that occasionally he stops to look at the bullet hole in the door of his church. Rubbing his hand over the place where the bullet is still imbedded in the door, he remembers that sad night when his church did not have Sunday night services.

The basis of failure in Sunday night evangelistic services is a lack of motivation. This seems like a harsh thing to say but the success of some seems to prove it. We just don't want to badly enough.

*Pastor, Radnor Church, Nashville, Tenn.

Good Sunday night services are not an accident but rather the results of deliberate action. Somebody planned for them and someone executed those plans. Somebody prepared a good evangelistic sermon or perhaps a series of sermons for those services. I have learned that hard-hitting sermon series attract attention and stimulate interest on Sunday night. What about a series on "The Seven Churches of Revelation"? Here is an opportunity to preach a series on the doctrine of sin. "The Sin of Unbelief," "The Sin That Paralyzes," "The Sin Jesus Hated the Most," "The Man of Sin," and "The Unpardonable Sin" proved to attract attention and produced a revival spirit on Sunday night. Certainly this is a golden opportunity to preach holiness messages. Even if you are reasonably sure that everyone is a Christian, it is not probable that everyone is sanctified.

Above all, give an altar call every Sunday night. It need not be long nor of the "high pressure" variety. I make a practice of having an altar call every Sunday night without any exceptions. This fact is mentioned frequently through the year. Everyone that attends church knows he can come any Sunday night and have a chance to seek help at the altar. Even on those bitter cold nights with ice and snow so deep that travel is all but impossible, they know that there will be an altar call at

their church regardless of the number present. Eventually, this attitude will have a desirable effect on even the most indifferent.

Good singing is essential. Have the choir sing. Have two special songs. Put some life into this part of the service. Don't let the first part of the service drag, and you will find that the sermon will be less likely to drag.

Light up the outside of the church as well as the inside. Even if it is not a cathedral, it will look more inviting at night if there is plenty of light at the front door and in the parking area. Brighten the church by cutting away the overgrowth of shrubbery where people have to walk. "Come to the church in the wildwood" sounds good when set to music, but in this day of violence and civil unrest people would rather see where they are going at night. A brightly lighted exterior advertises the fact that something is happening on the inside.

Don't let a wrong attitude defeat your efforts. Remember, you will be forced to have some kind of night service—if only to save face. Others are having good Sunday night services; so can you. Work on your people who come on Sunday morning. Count and publish the Sunday night attendance. Teach your congregation to come back on Sunday night for the evening service. Preach on the necessity of soul winning. Preach evangelistic sermons to the small crowd that is there on Sunday night. You will be surprised at the spiritual needs in the small group. Jesus preached on the new birth to one man. Never, never say anything disparaging to a small crowd on Sunday night. Congratulate them for their zeal. Compliment them for their loyalty. It is not their fault that others did not follow their example.

Don't expect an overnight miracle. It will take time to change their thinking, time for them to catch the vision, time for them to feel the burden with you.

Work your community. Do some advertising in the neighborhood. There are many communities where you will not have competition from other churches on Sunday night. You can get visitors whose church has nothing to offer. You do! Spend some money on newspaper advertising. We spend \$50,000 for an annex and think it nothing unusual. Yet some people think it outrageous to spend \$50.00 for a newspaper ad. This just doesn't make sense.

Finally, work on your own heart. This is really what you want. This is what God really called you to do, isn't it? Remember years ago, that vision you had of being a soul winner? Has it all faded away? The appeal is going forth for evangelistic preachers who are called of God to the mission field. This is the route we will have to take to find such. Don't justify failure by the lame excuse, "We live in a different age." On that basis we will eventually have to close up shop on Sunday morning as well.

I have used the suggested plan in three situations over the past 11 years. It did not fail once. It is working well today. Perhaps the most frequent excuse heard is that of competition. Television, automobiles, Sunday afternoon trips—the list is endless. We do live in a highly competitive world. It will likely become more so with time. But I remember the slogan of an automobile dealer I once saw, "We don't meet competition; we make it." Let's make some competition for those things that are attracting people away from the church on Sunday night.

The "how" is here too

Why Have a Watch-Night Service?

By Millard Reed*

IT WAS a familiar voice on the phone but I could not quite place it. Then with a chuckle my old football buddy from high school days identified himself. He and his wife were in town to attend a convention of the hardware stores of which he was a manager, and asked if my wife and I would share dinner with them.

A 45-minute drive later He greeted us and ushered us into the amazing world of hardware-store conventions. It was like a "money-is-no-object General Assembly." Banners and slogans decorated the walls. Men and women in a variety of hats and costumes visited with store managers, encouraging them to stock their products. It was a swirl of activity.

At the final dinner, which was the climax to the three-day festival, my friend explained, "This whole thing hasn't cost me a cent. The company pays for our room here in the hotel, serves us the best food, and provides the finest entertainment. The total bill for this convention is many thousands of dollars!" "Yes," I replied, "but this is taking your valuable time that you could be giving to your local store. Why do you bother to attend?" He leaned closer to me over a now emptied plate and said earnestly, "It helps us evaluate the past and plan the future. We think that is important!"

Evaluation and planning are important for the people of God also.

There is no more appropriate period for perspective than the turn of the year and no better time for evaluation and planning than a watch-night service. Let's see that a well-planned service captures the imagination of our people by drawing them into participation and giving them an opportunity for expression. This is best accomplished in a two-part service.

PRAISE AND PERSPECTIVE: 9 to 10:45 p.m.

We have done our people a real disservice by abbreviating the watch-night service to a few minutes around midnight. We need time for praise and perspective. Evaluation in depth cannot be done in a moment.

The atmosphere for such a service should be free and congenial. If there are proper facilities, it could very well be in a social context with a meal or refreshments. Specific plans must fit the situation, but to keep the time moving, several of the following ingredients could be used:

Songs that are easily sung or heard should be included. Familiar choruses and often-sung hymns will be most meaningful. It could be a time for favorite selections if the requests are made ahead of time. Several special songs should be prepared that include a variety of persons as singers. Do not overlook youth groups or family groups who sing well.

Scripture that has been helpful may be quoted. A box of promises

*Pastor, Overland Park, Kans.

prepared for the occasion and drawn from by all present has proven to be a great blessing to many.

Brief talks from representative persons can be meaningful. Inform such persons in advance that they are to reflect on the past and express faith for the future. It is wise to suggest a time limit. Such persons could be department heads who could reflect upon the records and the plans of their departments. In a small congregation it could be the heads of the households represented who would reflect on God's blessing and express their determination to serve better. In a union meeting, it could be a word from each pastor.

Special features can help the program move. The NYPS could present a skit in which highlights of the church year could be reviewed. This could be humorous and heart-warming. Film or slides that members have taken of special events such as church construction, new pastor arrival, and Sunday school picnic, could be shown. (Don't lose your audience to the temptation of sleep. Be sure the operator is advised of time limits.)

Testimonies should be freely encouraged. Let all who wish express joy or frustration over the year past and intentions for the year approaching.

Conclude this part of the service with a song or two of purposeful intent, like "Lead On, O King Eternal" (No. 66, *Praise and Worship*), "Deeper, Deeper" (No. 258), or "We'll Work till Jesus Comes" (No. 188). Following this part of the service should be a brief period of recess.

DEDICATION AND PLANNING:
11:15 to 12 midnight

The atmosphere of this part of the evening should be deeply spiritual

and in the form of true worship. An instrumental song of invocation, such as "Saviour, like a Shepherd Lead Us" (No. 15), would call the people to the sanctuary and the service could proceed in this order:

Congregational Song—No. 28, "Lead Me to Calvary"

Congregational Song—No. 23, "Near the Cross"

Season of Prayer—Several leading

Special Music—A song of dedication such as "Submission" (No. 20, *Favorites, Number 3*)

Message from the pastor—"God's Challenge for the New Year"

- I. We have the *Commission*—Mark 16:15
 - A. Imperative, "Go . . ."
 - B. Personal, "... ye . . ."
 - C. Destination, "... into all the world"
 - D. Task, "... preach the gospel . . ."
- II. We have the *Message*—II Cor. 5:17-20
 - A. We are ambassadors, "... in Christ's stead . . ."
 - B. We bear a message of peace, "... reconciled . . ."
 - C. Divine relationship, "... to God"
- III. We have the *Power*—Acts 1:8
 - A. Power to witness
 - B. Power to serve
- IV. We have the *Incentive*—II Cor. 5:14, "The love of Christ constraineth us."
 - A. Loves supports.
 - B. Love gives.
 - C. Love sends.

Conclusion

Congregational Song—No. 11, "Take my Life and Let it Be"

Communion Service

Song while worshippers remain on knees with soloist singing verses and people singing the chorus each time—No. 29, "A Closer Walk with Thee"

Benediction and best wishes for the new year

My hardware manager friend said, "We think evaluation and planning are important." As we prepared to leave, I asked, "Do all store managers come to these meetings?" "No," he said, "only the ones who want to do better!"

"Bearing Witness to the Truth"

By W. T. Purkiser*

OF ALL THE PROFESSIONS, the architect's is probably the most vulnerable. The doctor buries his mistakes. The lawyer's mistakes go to jail. But the architect's mistakes are forever open to the eyes of all to see.

At first glance, "Bearing Witness to the Truth" might seem a rather remote theme for a conference on church building and architecture. Yet the connection is very real, and closer than most of us have suspected.

Everything the Church is and does is witness. Our witness is not just the intentional and the verbal. It is not just what we say. It is all that we are and all that we do.

And everything the Church is and does is under scrutiny in these critical times. The Church itself is under attack today as never before in modern times. Both friend and foe are announcing with increasing emphasis the death of what is called the "institutional church." One is reminded of the legendary story that Mark Twain once read his obituary in the newspaper. He penned a letter to the editor:

"Dear Sir," he said: "The recent report of my death is highly exaggerated and a little premature. Respectfully yours."

Some announcements of the death of the Church sound almost gleeful. Others are nostalgic and sad. All are highly exaggerated and completely premature.

To the extent that any church becomes a social club, a self-improvement society, just a human institution, its future may indeed be dim. But the Church with which we are concerned is not just a human organization. It is ordained by Christ and created by His Spirit. Its endurance

and destiny are assured in the promise that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Yet the very fact that the Church is under attack today gives point to the problems of this conference. What are we saying to our communities, perhaps without intending it and even without words? Do our church buildings say silently what we are trying to say audibly?

It is certainly true that God can and does bless His people in worship and the preaching of His Word under any circumstances in which it must be done—under the brush arbor, in the "glory barn," or what have you. But this is only on one condition. The condition is that what is used is the best possible, the best of which the group is capable. If there were nothing else in Scripture, Malachi 1, with its trenchant criticism of those who dwell in ceiled houses while the Temple of the Lord was in ruins, would effectively establish this fact.

That God is concerned with buildings is amply proved by the Old Testament emphasis on the Tabernacle and the Temple. The most careful instructions were given for the building of both structures. Much of the arrangement of space and furnishings was obviously typical. The buildings stood for something beyond their bare existence.

Now it is quite true that we live in the new age of the Spirit. The Church is a community of the redeemed, a fellowship of the Spirit, a spiritual Temple built of living stones, growing up into a habitation of God through His Spirit. It is the body and bride of Christ, the brotherhood of His people.

Yet at the same time, ours is a religion of the Incarnation and a religion of sacraments. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and flesh is substance and physical reality. It occupies space. The

*Editor, *Herald of Holiness*, Kansas City.

Incarnation and all it implies is the point at which Christianity differs most radically from all other religions. It is first of all a life, to be sure. But it is a tangible, and touchable, life. Father Divine used to say, "Us metaphysicians finds it hard to tangibilitate." So do "us preachers," "us theologians." But "tangibilitate" we must. And "tangibilitate" we do through our buildings—the visible evidence of what any people regard as the primary role of their Church.

This is not to plead for an "edifice complex." But it is a plea to take seriously the role of the physical plant. There is a sense in which the church building itself is a sacrament. That is, it is something ordinary and tangible which has a meaning beyond itself. It is an embodiment of faith, "a creed in concrete," a mute witness conveying its message 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is more than a meeting place. It represents the sacred in the secular city. Its tangible presence helps us realize that God is acting in our place and time. Church architecture is almost a form of evangelism—witnessing mutely to an unbelieving world.

THERE ARE AT LEAST two questions we should consider here: How do church buildings bear witness? To what distinctives should our buildings bear witness?

In answer to the first question: Buildings witness both as tools and as symbols. The most obvious function of any building is its usefulness as a tool. It is a means to an end beyond itself.

There are, of course, subtle ways in which a building can become the end rather than the means—for one of our most persistent human temptations is to exalt means to the status of ends. In not a few cases, the building program has so preempted the attention of pastor and people that it has actually become their goal. When the building is completed, enthusiasm, vision, dedication, and sacrifice all grind to a halt. More than one pastor has found it advisable to move soon after completing a building for no other reason than that the building represented "mission accomplished," and when it was finished there seemed nothing else to do.

This is not to say that means and ends can be separated absolutely. If there is no place to preach the gospel, the first task is to find one. Further, there is an inner and real relationship between the end and

the means chosen to achieve it. Inadequate or unworthy means may stifle the best of ends. This is one reason why a building program is, as has been said, "an act of practical theology." "Building to the glory of God" needs to be more than a cliché.

Yet the fact remains that the building is a means, not a monument. It is a tool, not a Babylonian tower of human pride. Use, not appearance alone, must govern its planning and construction. Function is the guide in constructing a tool. As Edward S. Frey put it, "We not only worship in our buildings . . . we worship with them" (*This Before Architecture*, p. 89).

Alongside the witness of the church building as a tool is its witness as a symbol. This takes us much farther.

Man alone is the symbol-making, sign-reading creature. A symbol points beyond itself to the reality it represents. We can express in symbols much that we cannot put in any other way.

The Christian life, in its deepest reaches, is much more than can be expressed in words. Some of this "plus" of meaning can be shown only in life, in deeds. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and one contemporary theologian commented, "Man sought the truth, and God answered with a Life." There are dimensions of faith that go far beyond the power of words to communicate. The world has a right to demand of the Church, "Don't tell us; show us."

Other areas of meaning can be expressed best in art. Scripture itself with its abundance of metaphor, simile, parable, and picture language, conveys a "plus" of emotional and motivational content beyond the rational and logical. Great literature, which the Bible is beyond all argument, is a true and important art form.

The place of music in expressing the reach of faith is readily apparent. Music has conveyed overtones of feeling and awareness ever since the "Song of Lamech" in the fourth chapter of Genesis. The psalmists laid claim to all types of musical instruments whose wordless melodies, harmonies, and rhythms were charged to "praise God . . . according to his excellent greatness" (Psalms 150:1-2).

The value of other forms of religious art are less appreciated, but still real. As Andre Maurois has pointed out, "All art in its origin was religious, and . . . religion has often found in art the means of communicating to the human consciousness

truths which the intelligence can discover only with difficulty" (quoted by Edward A. Socik, *Architectural Esthetics and the Church*, p. 3).

While architecture is less often recognized as an art form, its possibilities are very real. Form, symmetry, color, and the very choice of materials convey meanings beyond the utility of the structure. Art, music, and architecture meet us at a level of intuition or awareness we commonly call feeling and which the psychologist knows as "affective apperception." It is one of the ways we come to know the reality beyond the symbol.

An illustration of the way in which art may convey meaning beyond words is found in the doctrine of the atonement. The welter of theories of the atonement in theology, in comparison with the rugged and simple reality of the Cross, demonstrates how difficult it is to capture the meaning of our Lord's vicarious sacrifice in words alone. We may think about the atonement at our desks or in our armchairs. But the Cross, as represented in art and architecture, can bring us to our knees. The "how" of it all may still be unclear. But the "that" of it is compelling.

Function and symbol may indeed come together, as in planning a sanctuary both for evangelism and to express the oneness of the laity and ministry in the church. Or they may be set at cross-purposes, as when the symbolism of kneeling for prayer is frustrated by placing the pews so close together as to make it all but impossible.

THE SECOND QUESTION is, "To what truth do we witness, in function and in symbol?" This must be asked in two ways. Negatively, we must ask, What contradicts our beliefs? Positively, we must ask, What expresses our beliefs?

Spiritual values are obviously the most difficult to express in brick and mortar. We may readily reflect our affluence, our love of luxury, or esthetic sense of beauty, color, and spaciousness. But the much more fundamental and important elements of faith are hard to exemplify in tangible and spatial form.

Much of the truth to which we would witness is truth we share with normative Christianity through all the ages. None of it is exclusively ours in any sectarian sort of way. What is distinctive is our blending and proportioning of the truth as God has given us to see and to share it.

I. AS PROTESTANTS, we stand for the centrality of the preaching of the Word in

public worship. For this reason, we are suspicious of the so-called "divided chancel" with reading desk and pulpit on opposite sides of the platform, and the high altar or table at the center.

The significance of preaching is also being challenged in our day, as is the Church itself. The widely spoken charge is that preaching is irrelevant. Some preaching may indeed be, but preaching itself never is. It pleases God by the foolishness of what is preached to save those who believe.

It was Emil Brunner who gave classic expression to the abiding meaning of preaching: "Where there is true preaching, where, in the obedience of faith, the Word is proclaimed, there, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, the most important thing that ever happens upon this earth takes place" (*Revelation and Reason*, p. 142; quoted by Gene Bartlett, *The Audacity of Preaching*, p. 38).

There is much that could be said here. That preaching is the important element in the church's public worship means that the pulpit itself should not be so massive or so ornate as to detract from the spoken word.

That the preaching is part of worship would also dictate that the pulpit be as near the level of the congregation as is feasible—and that both platform and congregational seating be obviously part of one architectural space.

The unity of the Church as the body of Christ embracing both laity and ministry also suggests that the division between platform and seating area be as inconspicuous as possible. For this reason, steps the entire length of the platform are best. They help to offset the suggestion that the preacher is on a pedestal, declaiming to a passive audience—when in reality the preacher is a fellow worshiper, expressing his church's faith in an act of obedience and devotion that embraces both speaker and hearers.

The shape of the auditorium and arrangement of the seating should also be such as to bring each worshiper as close as possible to the pulpit. Long, narrow sanctuaries contribute unnecessarily to the "spectator syndrome," while balconies are the worst possible device for gaining added seating space.

The doors of the sanctuary should be both wide and open—or all of plate glass—so that people approaching can see within. Even a little loss in heat or air conditioning efficiency will be abundantly repaid by the implied welcome of an open door.

II. PREACHING FOR US will always have an evangelistic note. For this reason, the altar will not be a Communion rail or a table with candles, but a properly designed and easily accessible place to pray. Such an altar in the church proclaims the fact that the church is not only evangelical, but evangelistic. "We have an altar," and there we meet the Christ who is "the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

This is possibly the most distinctive part of our witness to the truth. The altar is not for minister or priest alone, but for all the people. It is a place of meeting between God and man. Each aisle should converge in its direction, and adequate space in front and behind is a "must."

III. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES are an important element in our church buildings. We are dedicated to the necessity of nurture for the new Christian life. Ours is not a belief that one single act of saving faith provides a paid-up policy insuring the individual of a happy eternity. We believe that our calling and election must be made sure by growth in grace and knowledge.

For this reason, as we long ago learned, we cannot get by with a bare hall to serve as a meeting place for the entire congregation. Nor is a dank, dark basement sufficient. As Edward S. Frey mused, "How many thousands of our children, at their most tender and sensitive years of impression, are introduced to Jesus Christ and His church in moldy, poorly lighted, badly ventilated, overcrowded basements" (*op. cit.*, p. 50).

IV. IN A FOURTH AREA, I go out on thin ice. I believe that our concept of the fellowship of the Church should find expression in our church buildings, and can do so to the glory of God. There should be a service area with provision for genuine sharing, including the breaking of bread together. I recognize that there are differences of opinion. Certainly no congregation should do what is contrary to the sincere conviction of a majority of its people. Yet I am old enough to remember well the first permanent building ever built by a Church of the Nazarene, at Sixth and Wall Streets in Los Angeles. There was a kitchen in the annex just back of the platform of the sanctuary. There many of the members ate together on Sunday noon before going out on the street for their street meetings in the afternoon. There they had a snack before going to the six o'clock

"glory room" prayer meeting before the Sunday evening service.

It is honestly difficult for me to understand how those who read the Bible can make a major issue at this point. Old Testament worship centered in the feast, where the sacrifice that had been first offered on the altar to God was eaten by the people with joy. The Acts of the Apostles makes reference to the believers breaking bread together. I take with an element of literal truth the statement of the apostles about the need to be relieved of the serving of tables. The earliest church buildings in New Testament times were the larger houses of some of the more wealthy members, and all had their areas for food preparation. I Corinthians 11, the only place in the New Testament that seems to restrict such eating together, actually testifies that the gathering of the Christians was more than Eucharist or Sacrament, it was a fellowship meal—for the slaves among the group, without any doubt the best meal of the week. What is forbidden is the abuse, not the use, of the fellowship meal.

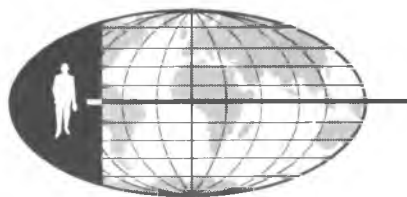
I am not pleading for feasting but for fellowship. I do not ask for more emphasis on the supper room than on the Upper Room. But after the Upper Room, there is a place in the church and its building for warm Christian fellowship.

TWO OTHER MORE GENERAL ideas can be conveyed by the architecture of the church building. One is the idea of permanence. Without being extravagant, the church should be substantial. It should say to its community, Here is an institution that has come to stay. Here is something people believe in to the extent that they are willing to sacrifice and give, making it—like a home for a family—a major investment of their stewardship.

The church building is a bridge into the future. It is something that will last. It is an element of continuity in the coming and going of our mobile society. The church to which I now belong worships in a building built before I came (although I am helping to pay for it) and that will be there after I am gone.

Then, the church building can convey the idea of relevance. We don't do this by going back to the baroque or Gothic architecture of the Middle Ages. I like a church building that is churchly—but I want that churchliness expressed in mod-

(Continued on page 45)



The PASTOR'S SUPPLEMENT

.....
Compiled by The General Stewardship Committee

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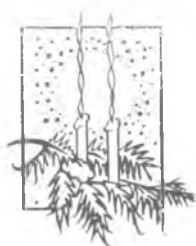
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Christmas Greetings



The staff of the Department of Home Missions and the Division of Church Extension bring greetings to the pastors of the Church of the Nazarene.

May the glory and hope of the Christmas season give joy to you. We trust that the services of our department have made your task easier this year.

*Raymond W. Hurn, Executive Secretary
Alpin P. Bowes, Office Manager*

BIBLE SOCIETY OFFERING

The annual offering for the Bible Society is set for December 8, or some other convenient Sunday.

The work of the Bible Society becomes increasingly important in a world of accelerated turmoil and confusion. Every church can wholeheartedly support this worthy cause. In the United States there is an added reason for appreciation for the American Bible Society, for it has supplied a gift pulpit Bible to every new church for the past 17 years. The Department of Home Missions has served as the denominational agent through which these gifts have been cleared.

REMEMBER A HOME MISSIONS PASTOR

Christmas should be a time of thoughtfulness towards others. Many churches choose this season to do something special for a home missions pastor who otherwise might have a meager Christmas.

Contact your district superintendent for the name of a home missions pastor your church may help. If there are none in your area, the Department of Home Missions will be glad to put you in contact with a pastor of a home missions area, at home or abroad. The experience of sharing will bring joy to your congregation.



**Have you included the youth in your plans
for the DENOMINATION-WIDE training
emphasis for February and March?**

Choose at least one of these courses. For a complete description refer to your *Blue Book*.

Unit 314.3a "Biblical Catechism"

Text: *Adventures in Truth*

Unit 132.1a "General Rules—Church of the Nazarene"

Text: *Guidelines for Conduct*

Unit 315.9a "Youth and Christian Friendships"

Text: *Too Young for Love?*

If these courses do not seem best, select others from your *Blue Book*.

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USE THESE



U-5514



U-5513

Church Summary for 1968

In a short time each Nazarene church pastor will receive in the mail a copy of a news story about the denomination's gains and highlights during 1968. This will be printed in your newspaper if you will help.

Since it is a year-end review, the best time to take it to your editor (weekly) or church news editor (daily) will be on Monday or Tuesday, December 30 or 31, or the following week on January 6 or 7.

Your newspaper will be more interested in a report for 1968 on your local church, so we suggest that you prepare a summary of your own church highlights. Type this out, double-spaced on one side of a sheet of paper. Then turn in your story and the summary from church headquarters in Kansas City, Mo., at the same time.

Scores of Nazarene pastors have found that this visit to their newspaper office has been an ideal time to start their press-relations program—to get acquainted.

In the use of this release from Kansas City, we suggest that you cooperate with other Nazarene church pastors in your area who may be served by the same newspaper. It would be appropriate to prepare an area Nazarene summary report and have one pastor call at the newspaper for all the Nazarene churches in your community.

Many pastors have good media relations with broadcasting stations and use our annual summary for stories to radio and television newsmen. Extra copies of our year-end summary will be sent on request.

O. JOE OLSON, *Director*

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VIN A FAMILY

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"Go ye therefore . . ."

Matthew 28:19

*The Church
dare not
wait...*

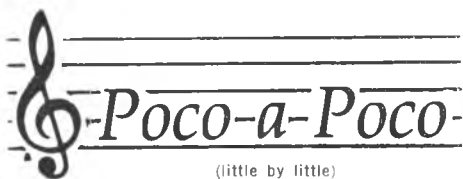


for people to come to it; rather, as Christ commanded, the Church must go to them. The day has long since passed when a church could expect people to come because a service was announced. Instead, the church must seek out the people where they are. Therefore, visitation evangelism is an essential part of the outreach of any growing church. Such a program of active outreach is a necessary support for mass evangelism, be it in special evangelistic meetings or the regular services of the church; and it also provides excellent opportunity for personal evangelism.

Yet a recent survey conducted by the Department of Evangelism revealed that only 58 percent of our churches have anything which they can call a visitation program. Many in this group were admittedly weak and ineffective—not to mention the remaining 42 percent of our churches which have no visitation program of any type. Such is inconsistent with our mission to evangelize our generation for Christ.

Let us reexamine our priorities and restore visitation evangelism to its necessary place in the life and program of our churches!

★
★ As our thoughts turn to another Christmas season, it is our hope that every ★
★ local church will remember the commissioned evangelists who served them ★
★ this year. Your gifts to these who have answered the call of God to full- ★
★ time evangelism will be a blessing to them and their families during this ★
★ period when their income is relatively curtailed. Be sure to consult your ★
★ church board about the Department's CHRISTMAS LETTER. ★
★



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to play the piano.
That's the way he got to
be older too.
Little by little.

LITTLE BY LITTLE,
maybe he can know how
much we love him.

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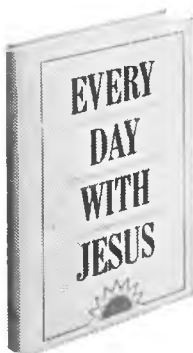
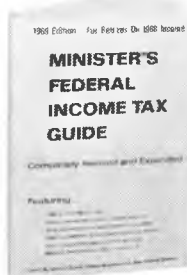
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The Nazarene Preacher

PRAYER AND FASTING BRINGS RESULTS

On the mission field or in the homeland, when Christians pray and fast, God comes on the scene. People are saved; problems are solved; revival comes to churches. A few years ago the entire Church of the Nazarene shared in three days of prayer and fasting prior to Easter. Some of the results on the mission fields are printed below.

PHILIPPINES: A wonderful spirit followed our time of prayer and fasting. There were many seekers; our offerings were greatly increased; and new people were reached.

CENTRAL MEXICO: New souls were added to our church, and a spiritual awakening swept the major portion of the district, following an extended period of prayer and fasting.

MOZAMBIQUE: Our Bible school students and teachers arranged for a chain of prayer with fasting and took it very seriously. On the first night a great prayer meeting broke out among the young women. There were some wonderful victories. Later there was a great outpouring of God's Spirit on our Sunday afternoon service.

BARBADOS: The days of prayer and fasting have been a boon to the work in Barbados. Pastors' Convention which followed was the best we have had, and many testified to a fresh infilling of the Holy Ghost; Youth Camp saw seekers for salvation and sanctification; many sought God during the quarterly meetings. Monday morning, following the Sunday services, a missionary was called to the home of a sick man who was deeply convicted of sin. A back-slidden woman in the home also repented and both found God.

NICARAGUA: One of our pastors reports that his church has at least 70 percent more spirit and life since their time of prayer and fasting. The people are enthusiastic about God's work. Without any suggestion or urging from pastor or missionary, a group of the people in another church started calling on people in the town. That night two new people were converted and four others went forward to be sanctified. Twelve people were baptized from one of our other churches.

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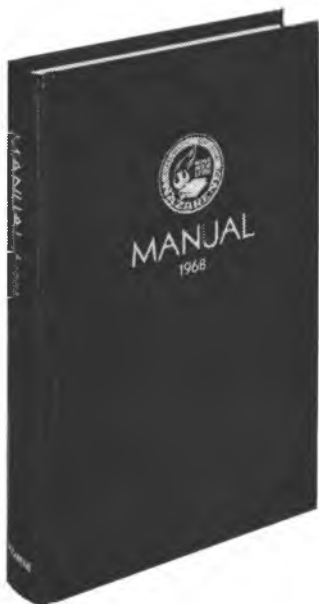
A. Yes. The money which your church gives you with which to pay your Social Security is reported as a part of your salary at the end of the year. It must be reported as a part of your gross income on your Federal Income tax and also on your Social Security.

Q. I am interested in the Nazarene Retirement Plan. Who pays the annuity premiums into this plan?

A. The employing organization pays the annuity premium. You and your employing organization pick the amount of premium to be paid into the plan, subject to the maximum amount applicable to you under the federal law. Up to 20 percent of your salary each year may be used to purchase retirement annuities. And in order to receive this tax relief, the premium for the annuity must be paid by your employer either from your existing salary, necessitating a salary reduction, or through a salary increase, thereby maintaining your present take-home pay, or a combination of the two.

Q. I have participated in the supplemental group term life insurance program for several years. Now I realize that as I get older the coverage is less and less while the premium continues to go up. It does not seem fair for my insurance coverage to be reduced at a time when I need it the most. Can you help me with this problem?

A. The type of life insurance that you are asking about is "group term coverage." This is the least expensive form of life insurance protection that one could buy. Through a group term plan, one purchases protection on an annual basis according to the individual's attained age on the anniversary date of the policy. There are no cash or loan values in this type of protection. The statement of having the insurance reduced at a time when the individual needs it the most is not entirely accurate. When we stop to think about it, we realize that we generally need the most life insurance protection from the ages of 20 or 25 until about 50 or 55. This is the period of life when we are generally rearing a family and have our heaviest debts. The Board of Pensions is not attempting to provide estate-building insurance for our ministers. It is attempting to provide adequate provision for normal "last" expenses and incurred debts.



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Queen of the parsonage.....

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Gift Exchange

DECORATED WINDOWS . . . Christmas carols . . . Salvationists ringing their bells on the corner . . . milling crowds . . . This is all a part of Christmas shopping! At this season everyone is thinking of gifts—trying to select the right gift for each one on the Christmas list. Some will give extravagantly, far more than they can afford, and others who could give will be as tight as Scrooge.

We will be giving other gifts too—gifts that cannot be measured in monetary value, gifts that cannot be boxed and wrapped with fancy paper and tied with satin ribbon. We will be giving these gifts for the most part unconsciously. Will we give them joyously, warmheartedly, enthusiastically? Or will we give them dutifully, reluctantly, resentfully, thoughtlessly, vehemently?

What will we be giving? Peter answered this. He was going into the Temple one day and encountered a man begging for alms. Peter had none to give and told the man so, but he said, "Such as I have give I thee." And he gave him *wholeness* in the name of Jesus. All of us are giving "such as we have," whether we realize it or not. In the temporal realm we may go in debt and generously give that which we really do not have, or we may withhold that which we have, but will not give. In the spiritual realm we cannot give what we do not have. We unconsciously give what we do have.

One lady said of her pastor's wife, "I always receive something from her. We may not even talk on spiritual things, but just being with her enriches me and I leave refreshed in my soul."

Giving is only one half of a gift exchange. We must also receive. Some who can *give* graciously do not *receive* graciously. They do not know how to receive gifts, or compliments, or advice. We may all be guilty of this at times. When complimented on an attractive dress, we respond, "This old rag . . ." Instead of receiving with simple pleasure, we respond with embarrassed excuses, awkward denials, or false attempts at modesty.

Gertrude Taylor tells of a friend many years ago who constantly gossiped and criticized others until Mrs. Taylor began avoiding her. One day in prayer the Holy Spirit rebuked her about her attitude toward this lady who really needed her friendship. "But I have done many kind things for her," she rationalized. "I have taken her homemade cakes, given her children little presents and extra money . . ." The Holy Spirit reminded her that she had given "things" but had not given of herself. She was made aware that this unfortunate lady was giving "such as she had," which was criticism, gossip, and complaints. Mrs. Taylor decided to "receive" what this lady had to give, and in exchange share the good graces of God that were hers. The relation-

ship changed: As the lady was offered gifts of love from a Christian heart, a real friendship developed.

Frequently we meet those who disturb us with their hatefulness, their abruptness, their arrogance, their disloyalty. But the picture has changed for me since I think of them as giving such as they have. They give from hearts that are bitter, sore, disappointed, lonely. Try a gift exchange! If that is all they have to give, receive it (and them), and give such as you have.

Too often we feel like returning in kind. "I wish I knew how much she was spending on me, so I'd know what to get her." "She certainly wasn't considerate of me, so why should I go out of my way for her!" Jesus teaches plainly that we should not return evil for evil. "Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you" The Christian's gift exchange is always "beauty for ashes."

I once heard Uncle Bud Robinson relate an experience he had in a train station, in which the ticket agent so aggravated him that he reacted with less than perfect love. He testified that as he walked away from the ticket window the "little bird" quit singing in his soul. Checked thus by the Holy Spirit, he went back to the window, humbly apologized, and said, "God bless you." The eyes of the ticket agent filled with tears and he thrust his hand through the window cage and said, "Good luck to you, old boy!" "That's the best he had to offer," Uncle Bud said. It was a gift exchange—such as each had—and both felt better.

My husband was coming home from

a 12-day sojourn in the hospital last year, and on the way to pick him up I stopped by the car wash. (I thought a clean car would add to his pleasure.) My happiness must have shown, for as I stepped to the cashier's window she commented, "My, it's so nice to meet a happy person!" We chatted briefly and she handed me a candy bar, which was customary with each car wash. I stepped aside as she waited on the next customer, and as she handed him his candy bar, she shoved another around the side of the counter to me. "I already have mine," I said. "I know," she said, "but I just want you to have another." I felt humbled—but good—and hoped I would remember how important it is to be warm and pleasant to those who deal with indifferent, impatient, hurried, worried people all day long.

Jesus knew how to give. And how to receive. One even accused Him of "receiving sinners." He received little children, beggars, false accusers, a little lad's lunch, stripes, a crown of thorns, a cross. He was always giving—water of life to sinful woman, sight to a blind man, hope to the despairing, strength to the weak, courage to the faint, giving His peace, His joy, himself.

Begin this Christmas season with a gift exchange that will continue all year. Accept graciously what others offer and quickly return such as you have. Offer that harassed clerk understanding, that stony-faced elevator girl a smile. Though some may not seem to respond and receive your gift, they may "unwrap" it by and by in secret.

A joyous Christmas to each one.

A cross Christian, or an anxious Christian, a discouraged, gloomy Christian, a doubting Christian, a complaining Christian, an exacting Christian, a selfish Christian, a cruel, hard-hearted Christian, a self-indulgent Christian, a Christian with a sharp tongue or bitter spirit, all these may be very earnest in their work, and may have honorable places in the Church; but they are NOT Christlike Christians, and they know nothing of the realities [of the sanctified] life no matter how loud their professions may be.

—Hannah Whitall Smith

The Greatest Prayer of All

Meditations on John 17

By H. K. Bedwell*

No. 13 Perfect Love

"That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be *in them* . . ." This belongs to the final sentence in this greatest of all prayers. The emphasis is on the two words "in them." There is an important distinction between God's love for us and God's love in us.

The measure and quality of God's love for us are stated in two breath-taking sentences, both of which were uttered by Jesus himself. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you" (John 15:9), and, "Thou . . . hast loved them, *as thou hast loved me*" (John 17:23). This is marvelous! This is wonderful! He loves me in the same way as the Father loves Him, and the Father loves me in the same way as He loves the Son. Let this glorious fact grip our souls and thrill us until every doubt is dispelled and every fear banished and there fills our hearts the "full assurance of faith."

This quality of love is not only *for us*; it is to be *in us*. This is what Jesus said. "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be *in them*." This is the "perfect love" about which John wrote in his Epistle, and this is what John Wesley meant when he said, "There is nothing higher or lower than this: pure love of God and man: the loving of God with all our heart and soul, and our neighbour as ourselves; it is love governing the heart and life, running through all our tempers, words, and action." It is God's love exercised

through the affections of a human heart completely given over to divine control. This is a love which far transcends the very highest human love. We do not naturally possess such love, and we cannot by effort attain it. It is "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:5). It is God expressing His love through man.

We shall understand the import of these words of Jesus spoken at the very end of this prayer if we ponder for a while the nature of the Father's love for the Son, which is to be operating in us. Let us note three outstanding characteristics of this love:

1. *It is a selfless love.*

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Here is love at its highest peak. Human love can be noble and sacrificial in a very high degree, but it is never completely devoid of self-interest. There can be no greater demonstration of utter selflessness in love than God's love for a lost world. His intimate, burning, tender, and infinite love for His only beloved Son did not deter Him from giving Him in sacrifice to save doomed souls. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). He gave up His most prized possession in order to make salvation available to all men. Divine love is prepared to sacrifice the best in order to save the worst. This is the dynamic that drove Paul to travel and toil and preach and

*Nazarene missionary, Stegi, Swaziland, South Africa.

ultimately to die. It was the "love of Christ" which constrained him. This is why the early Christians could give their lives triumphantly in the arena. This is the power that has held men and women true to God in every generation, in spite of the fiercest persecution and the most terrible suffering. This is the secret of the unsung sacrifice of countless unknown missionaries, who have left home, country, and loved ones, and lived and died to proclaim that love to depraved and degraded people. Such love is a consuming fire which counts no price too high to bring lost souls to God. In effect Jesus said, "I want the kind of love to be in you that gave Me to save a lost world, that you too may give yourself without reserve to make known the message of salvation"; for this is what He meant when He said, "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." Do I have such a selfless love?

2. *It is a satisfied love.*

Three times the Father broke the silence of heaven with an audible voice while Jesus was on earth in the flesh. On two of these occasions He announced, "This is my beloved Son," and added, "in whom I am well pleased." His love for His Son was without shadow or grief or disappointment. We could paraphrase these words, "This is my well-loved Son, in whom I am completely satisfied." Love may be grieved, spurned, or unrequited, but in the love of the Father for the Son there was unqualified delight and satisfaction. Jesus could say, "I do always those things that please him." His love toward His Father made it unthinkable that He should do anything to displease Him. His one desire was to do all His will.

Now Jesus said, This is the kind of love I want in My people, a love that satisfies God. Jesus expressly taught that the test of true love is obedience. He said, "If you love me, keep my commandments," and, "If a man love me, he will keep my words" (John 14:15, 23). Can God say of you, "This is My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased"? He wants us to love Him in such a way

that no divided affection, no indifference, no coolness, no disobedience mars the satisfaction of His love toward us. It is this kind of love that Charles Wesley cried out for in one of his best known hymns:

*A heart in every thought renewed,
And full of love divine,
Perfect, and right, and pure, and
good—*

A copy, Lord, of Thine.

When such a love burns on the altar of our hearts, we do God's will, not because we must, but because we delight to please the One who loves us much.

3. *It is a stable love.*

The love of the Father for the Son never changes, never cools off, never comes to end. It is eternal and immutable. Jesus could say, "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (v. 24). But He could also say in the present tense, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands" (3:35). This love then is enduring, unchanging, eternal. It does not pass with the passing of time; it is not affected by the vicissitudes of life. This is the kind of love Jesus wants expressed in us. He desires us to have a love that will not change, will not diminish, will not cool off, will not be quenched. It means that in possessing such a love we will go on loving even when we are not loved in return. Persecution, hatred, slander, criticism, injustice, and misunderstanding will not quench the flames of such love, which is not human in origin, but comes from God himself. Jesus had this kind of love. In 13:1 we read, ". . . having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." He continued to love in the face of treachery, betrayal, denial, desertion, injustice, cruelty, and hatred. Amidst the pain and shame of the cruel Cross, He could still pray, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." This is love most triumphant. It conquers all. Only God's love burning within our hearts can enable us to bless those who curse us and do good to

(Continued on page 45)

Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle*

I Thess. 5:1-11

"Times and Seasons"

The first noun is *chronos*, from which comes "chronology." It means: "*Time*, mostly in the sense a *period of time*." The term occurs 53 times in New Testament. It is rendered "time" 33 of these, and "season" four.

The second noun is *kairos*. It is found 86 times and is translated "time" in 63 of these and "season" in 13.

The same combination of words is found in Acts 1:7, where Jesus said to His disciples: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Yet in a general way, Paul declares, Christians are aware of the times and seasons.

Kairos is a more distinctive term than *chronos*, as shown by its rendering in these two passages. Trench points out the difference as follows: "*Chronos* is time, contemplated simply as such; the succession of moments. . . . *Kairos* . . . is time as it brings forth its several births."² Commenting on Acts 1:7, he writes: "'The times' (*chronoi*) are, in Augustine's words 'ipsa spatia temporum,' and these contemplated merely under the aspect of their duration, over which the Church's history should extend: but 'the seasons' (*kairoi*) are the joints or articulations in these times, the critical epoch-making periods fore-ordained of God."³

Abbott-Smith summarizes well the early history of *kairos*: "1. *due meas-*

ure, fitness, proportion (Euripides, Xenophon, others). 2. Of Time (classical also) in the sense of a fixed and definite period, *time, season*."⁴ Arndt and Gingrich say that *kairos* means "*point of time* as well as *period of time*."⁵ They define it as "the right, proper, favorable time"—and so it may be translated "opportunity" in some passages in the New Testament—and so as "definite, fixed time."⁶ They add: "Definite, fixed time can also refer to the last things, hence *kairos* becomes . . . one of the chief eschatological terms, *ho kairos, the time of crisis, the last times*."⁷ On Acts 1:7 and this passage they say: "*Times and seasons, which must be completed before the final consummation*."⁸

Delling notes that the sense of the "decisive moment" is found in Greek philosophers from the time of Sophocles. The Pythagoreans placed especially strong emphasis on *kairos*. In the Septuagint the term is used for the "decisive point of time," though not as markedly as in later Christian writings. In the New Testament it means: "The 'fateful and decisive point,' with strong, though not always explicit, emphasis (except at Acts 24:25) on the fact that it is ordained by God."⁹

Lightfoot sums up well the difference between these two terms. He writes: "Here *chronoi* denotes the period which must elapse before and in the consummation of this great event, in other words it points to the date: while *kairoi* refers to the occurrences

*Professor, Greek New Testament, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.

which will mark the occasion, the signs by which its approach will be ushered in. . . ."¹⁰

It is interesting to note that in modern Greek *chronos* means "year," that is, a measurement of time, whereas *kairos* means "weather." This follows out of the idea of "season."

"Safety" or "Security"?

The Greek word is *asphaleia* (v. 3). It first meant "firmness," then "certainty" (Luke 1:4), and finally "security" (Acts 5:23; I Thess. 5:3, not elsewhere in NT). In the papyri it is used as a law term, in the sense of "proof, security."¹¹ Moulton and Milligan say: "The noun occurs innumerable times in the commercial sense, 'a security.'"¹²

Many recent translations use "security" here instead of "safety." In this day of constant emphasis on "social security" and "national security" it would seem that this rendering is more meaningful. No vaunted "security" can guarantee against sudden disaster.

"Sudden"

The adjective *aiφhvidios* means "unexpected, sudden, unforeseen."¹³ It is difficult to bring this out in a simple English translation. The word occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in Luke 21:34, where it is rendered "unawares." Here it probably means that the destruction will come both suddenly and unexpectedly.

"Children" or "Sons"?

The Greek word is *huiοι* (v. 5), which means "sons," not *techna*, which is the proper word for "children." "Sons of light" (so most recent translations) is a Hebrew idiom, meaning people who have the character of light. This feature occurs many times in the New Testament. We read of "sons of the kingdom" (Matt. 8:12), "son of Gehenna" (Matt. 21:5), a "son of peace" (Luke 10:6), "sons of this age" (Luke 16:8), "sons of truth" (Eph. 2:2). The very

expression here, "sons of light," is found in Luke 16:8. They are contrasted with the "sons of this age." As sons of God we are sons of light, for 'God is light' (I John 1:5).

"Watch" or "Keep Awake"?

The verb *gregoreo* (v. 6) means "to be awake,"¹⁴ as well as "watch." In view of the previous part of the verse—"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others"—it seems evident that the best translation here is "keep awake" (RSV). The same verb is translated "wake" in verse 10, where it means "alive," not sleeping in death.

"Be Sober"

The verb *nepho* was originally used in a literal sense of abstaining from drinking wine. But in the New Testament it is employed only in the figurative sense, "Be free from every form of mental and spiritual 'drunkenness,' from excess, passion, rashness, confusion, etc., be well-balanced, self-controlled."¹⁵

"Edify" or "Build Up"?

The verb is *oikodomeo* (v. 11). It comes from *oikos*, "house," and *demo*, "build." So at first it meant "build a house." Then it came to be used in the general sense of "build." Probably "build up one another" (NASB) is more meaningful today than "edify one another."

¹⁰Arndt and Gingrich, *Lexicon*, p. 896.

¹¹*Synonyms of the New Testament*, p. 210.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 311.

¹³*Lexicon*, p. 226.

¹⁴*Lexicon*, p. 395.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 395-96.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 396.

¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁸Kittel, *Theological Dictionary*, III, 459.

¹⁹Notes, p. 71.

²⁰Abbott-Smith, *op-cit.*, p. 66.

²¹VGT, p. 88.

²²Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

²³Abbott-Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

²⁴Arndt and Gingrich, *op. cit.*, p. 540.

Some Seasonal Sermonic Suggestions

By Clarence T. Moore*

Messianic Strain in Genesis

TEXT: Gen. 3:15

INTRODUCTION

- A. Sin enters the world.
- B. God gives a promise and a provision.
- I. The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.
 - A. Through woman man fell, and through woman he shall be redeemed.
 - B. The Virgin Birth.
 - 1. The Seed of the woman
 - 2. His heel—the Christ's
- II. Cain and Abel bring offerings (Gen. 4:3-4).
 - A. Abel brought a blood offering—be-spoke of the Christ.
 - B. The Lord accepted Abel and his offering.
- III. God calls Abraham to form a nation (Gen. 18:18).
 - A. "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:18).
 - B. Promise, not to *seeds* as many, but to *Seed*, which is Christ (Gal. 3:16).
- IV. Melchizedek . . . priest of the most high God (Gen. 14:18).
 - A. "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Ps. 110:4).
 - B. Thou, the Christ, after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:6; 6:20; 7:17).
- V. Abraham offers Isaac (Gen. 22:1).
 - A. The father offers the son. "God so loved" (v. 2).

- B. The son, in Abraham's mind, dead three days (v. 4).
- C. A substitute provided (v. 13).

- VI. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah . . . until Shiloh [the Christ] come" (Gen. 49:10).

The First Christmas Songs

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1—2

INTRODUCTION

- A. Christmas and singing.
- B. Paul said, "I will sing with the spirit" (I Cor. 14:15).
- I. The song of Elisabeth (1:41-45)
 - A. She was filled with the Holy Ghost (v. 41).
 - B. She spoke with a loud voice (v. 42).
 - C. She called Mary "the mother of my Lord" (v. 43).
- II. The song of Mary (1:46-55)
 - A. Her soul magnified the Lord (vv. 46-47).
 - B. "He . . . hath done to me great things" (vv. 48-50).
 - C. "He hath shewed strength" (vv. 51-53).
 - D. He has remembered His promise "to Abraham, and to his seed" (the Christ) (vv. 54-55).
- III. The song of Zacharias (1:67-79)
 - A. He was filled with the Holy Ghost (v. 67).
 - B. He speaks of the promised Christ (vv. 69-75).

*Evangelist, Ft. Recovery, Ohio.

- C. He speaks of John, the forerunner of Christ (vv. 76-79).
- IV. The song of the angels (2:9-14)
 - A. The angel and the glory of the Lord (v. 9).
 - B. The angel message (vv. 10-12).
 - C. The angels' song (vv. 13-14).
- V. The song of the shepherds (2:20)
- VI. The song of Simeon (2:25-35)
 - A. The Holy Ghost revealed, and brought him to the Temple (vv. 25-27).
 - B. The song of Simeon (vv. 28-35).

VII. The song of Anna (2:36-38)

CONCLUSION:

- A. When Christ comes into our hearts, the fact will be revealed by the Holy Spirit.
- B. Our hearts will be filled with song.

The Birth of Jesus Was on This Wise

TEXT: Matt. 1:18

- I. Not a theory nor a hypothesis, but a fact
 - A. Luke said, "I write . . . in order . . . that thou mightest know" (1:3-4).
 - B. Peter said, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables" (II Pet. 1:16).
 - C. Matthew says, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise" (1:18).
- II. The Christmas story
 - A. Gabriel announced birth and mission of John to Zacharias (Luke 1:11-19).
 - B. Gabriel announces birth of Jesus to Mary (Luke 1:26-35).
 - C. Mary visits Elisabeth, who calls her "the mother of my Lord" (Luke 1:39-45).
 - D. Birth of John (Luke 1:57-79).
 - E. Angel speaks to Joseph giving name and mission of Jesus (Matt. 1:18-25).
 - F. Birth of Jesus and visit of shepherds (Luke 2:1-21).

- G. Jesus taken to the Temple (Luke 2:22-38).
- H. Visit of the wise men (Matt. 2:1-11).
- III. These things written that we might know the certainty of the Christ
 - A. Statements are infallible (Acts 1:3).
 - B. That we might believe (John 20:31).
- IV. Jesus said to go and tell

The Word

SCRIPTURE: Psalms 119

INTRODUCTION: The Bible is God's Book—"THY WORD."

- A. Sixty-six books
- B. Fifteen hundred years in writing
- C. Many authors—from kings and prophets to common people (see Amos 1:1)
- I. It speaks to all people, to all nations, to all tribes.
 - A. Bible has life.
 - B. Drives men to a decision.
- II. The Testaments.
 - A. Old carried over into New.
 - B. New Testament verifies the Old.
- III. Bible has many choice sayings—note these from Psalms 119.
 - A. The Word will cleanse our ways (v. 19).
 - B. It will protect from sin (v. 11).
 - C. It contains hidden treasures (v. 18).
 - D. Love for it gives wisdom (vv. 97-98).
 - E. It is a light to life's path (v. 105).
 - F. It lifts one above offense (v. 165).
- V. The BOOK among books.
 - A. The Best Seller
 - B. The best language
 - C. Most accurate history
 - D. Highest grade poetry
 - E. Best told stories
 - F. Highest type drama
 - G. Most reliable law
 - H. Greatest parables
- V. Bible is God's Word.
 - A. Let us love it, keep it, hide it in our hearts.

- B. It will keep from sin.
 - C. It will give assurance in life and in death.
- VI. Paul said, "Preach the word . . . in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort . . ."
- A. It will not return void (II Tim. 4:2).
 - B. It will accomplish (Isa. 55:11).

- C. It will give guidance (Isa. 30:21).
- D. It becomes our Food (Matt. 4:4).

- IV. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable . . ."
- A. "For doctrine"
 - B. "For reproof"
 - C. "For correction"
 - D. "For instruction in righteousness"

The Holy Scriptures

SCRIPTURE: II Pet. 1:20-21; II Tim. 3:16

INTRODUCTION: The Bible was written by either men or God.

- A. If men wrote it, men should now produce a book as good or better.
 - B. Man would not write such a book if he could—he would be self-condemned.
 - C. Man could not write such a book if he would—for a silly attempt see the *Book of Mormon*.
- I. The Bible is God's Book.
- A. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Pet. 1:21).
 - 1. Only logical answer for such a book.
 - 2. Evidence of a guiding mind; only *one mind* could guide over 1,500 years.
 - B. Prophecies of Old Testament fulfilled in New give assurance.
 - 1. Isa. 7:14 and Matt. 1:25
 - 2. Mic. 5:2 and Matt. 2:6
 - 3. Isa. 11:1 and Matt. 2:23
 - C. Fact that Christ was born, lived, died, and rose again according to the Old Testament prophecies (I Cor. 15:3-4), of which there are many infallible proofs, gives assurance to Old and New Testament.
- II. The Bible is a Book of power.
- A. Will produce the results it is said to produce.
 - B. Will not return void (Isa. 55:11).
- III. The Bible will make us wise unto salvation (II Tim. 3:15).
- A. It will save the soul (Jas. 1:21).
 - B. It will produce cleansing (Eph. 5:26).

The Word Made Flesh

TEXT: John 1:14

INTRODUCTION

- A. As an Example, He needn't have been divine.
 - B. As a Saviour, He must needs be divine.
- I. The Bible does teach the Virgin Birth.
- A. "The Word was made flesh."
 - B. "A virgin shall . . . bear a son" (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23).
 - C. Conceived by the Holy Ghost (Matt. 1:20).
- II. This is the Son of God (John 1:34).
- A. His only begotten Son (John 3:16).
 - B. The Father gave all to the Son (John 3:35).
 - C. Christ declares His divine power (John 5:24-29).
- III. "Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:29-36).
- A. As a Lamb, He must die.
 - 1. God cannot die.
 - 2. Only the flesh can die.
 - B. Christ, the Lamb (Exod. 12:3).
- IV. "The Son of man is come to save" (Matt. 18:11).
- A. As man—
 - 1. He hungered (Matt. 21:18).
 - 2. He wept (John 11:35).
 - 3. He was disappointed (Matt. 23:37).
 - 4. He suffered (John 19:28).
 - 5. He was tempted (Heb. 4:15).
 - B. As God—
 - 1. He raised the dead (three times).
 - 2. Stilled the waves (Mark 4:39).
 - 3. Walked on the water (Matt. 14:25).
 - 4. Fed the multitudes (twice).
 - 5. Rose from the dead.

- C. My works testify of Me (John 5: 36).
- V. "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28)
- A. When doubt sees, He is then Lord and God.
 - B. When the Word was made flesh, He became our Example, Leader, Ruler, God, Deliverer, Savior, Up-holder, and Life Giver.



"Watch Night" by Phone

We have a scattered city congregation. We had planned to have a one-hour watch-night service. The snow came. It was apparent the service would suffer. Instead of just phoning the people to cancel the service, I selected a few verses of scripture and read them and had prayer with everyone I called. At some homes we used extensions to involve two at a time. I'll use this again if we come up to a bad-weather cancellation situation again.

FRED G. WENGER
Harrisburg, Pa.

Unique Weekend Meeting

DISTURBED? SATISFIED? FED UP?

These words headlined the newspaper ad announcing to the community that their questions of personal, spiritual problems would be considered in directed, informal discussion sessions at our church.

Those attending our Sunday school and other services were likewise urged to write their questions for discussion. Our people were also encouraged to turn in questions raised by their friends outside the church, then invite them to come and participate in the discussion periods.

A Nazarene professor was invited to direct the three hour-and-a-half sessions. His varied background, educational qualifications, and particularly his mature interest in the problems of everyday Christian living, together with his approach of considering basic principles of conduct involved, made these informal sessions of vital spiritual profit to many.

PAUL G. BASSETT
Troy, Ohio

♪ Hymn of the month ♪

O Little Town of Bethlehem

(No. 448, *Praise and Worship* hymnal)

This beautiful Christmas song was written by Bishop Phillips Brooks (1835-93), a native of Boston, who became "the dominant pulpit force of all New England" because of his courage to preach Jesus Christ in that Unitarian stronghold. While he was rector of Holy Trinity (Episcopal) Church in Philadelphia, his church granted him a year's leave of absence to travel abroad. While in the Holy Land he determined to visit Bethlehem on Christmas Eve. He never forgot the impact of the scene, as traveling from Jerusalem with friends, they stopped on a hillside to look down at the little village calmly sleeping under the stars. On the hillsides round about, shepherds watched over their flocks by night. Three years later he wanted a new carol for his Sunday school children to sing at Christmas. He wrote the words of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and asked his organist to compose music for it in time for Christmas.

This composer, Lewis Henry Redner (1831-1908), was a native of Philadelphia, and served as organist and Sunday school superintendent of Holy Trinity Church during the incumbency of Phillips Brooks. With Dr. Brooks he organized the Sunday school with six teachers and 36 children. During his 19 years of service, the Sunday school membership increased to more than 1,000.

MY PROBLEM

PROBLEM: My treasurer tends to assume a protective and authoritative role over church finances, sometimes in disregard of board action. Recently my board authorized the payment of our budgets, but the treasurer balks. How can I handle this situation?

AN OHIO PASTOR URGES GENTLENESS:

This problem must be honestly faced, and yet the feelings and thinking of the treasurer must be understood. It is axiomatic that courtesy encourages communication. And communication inclines toward cooperation.

In talking with the treasurer be sure to mention the purpose of your visit. It is important that he trust you and that he knows you trust him. Perhaps his refusal to send the payments as ordered by the board is a reaction to his feeling that he is not trusted. Open acceptance of his feelings should lead toward getting down to the specific

problem and reaching a satisfactory solution.

In showing respect for his feelings in this matter you will very likely break down his barrier to cooperation. A good way to show this respect is to place yourself in the position of your treasurer. This should help you to be sensitive to his feelings.

Quite likely the treasurer has some hidden reasons for acting as he does with the church's money. Cooperativeness in your conversations with him is achieved when you show that you consider his ideas and feelings as important as your own. Accepting his ideas, within the limits of his office and spirit, will encourage him to open his mind to your ideas.

A WISCONSIN PASTOR COUNSELS FIRMNESS:

One is able to see that the church board and the pastor are found wanting because they have failed to exercise the authority given them by virtue of their office, the church members, and our *Manual*.

If the treasurer were new in this position, I would hasten to explain in private that the treasurer's position is that of a custodian and he is to disburse

SOME OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY LAST YEAR

DISTRIBUTED 43,941,553 Scriptures in the United States—an increase of 12.7 percent over 1966.

CIRCULATED 12 percent more Scriptures in over 150 countries and territories overseas.

SERVED the blind with 223,627 Scriptures in special formats (Braille, records, tapes).

GAVE through chaplains 1,190,839 Scriptures to service men and women at home and overseas—more than twice the number distributed in 1966. The year marked the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of Scripture donations to the armed services.

PRESENTED 12,500 students with A.B.S. Scriptures at two national triennial student conferences.

This is the sort of work for which we take our Bible Society Offering on December 8.

the monies only upon the discretion and approval of the church board.

But if the treasurer in question has held this position for any length of time, then I would be faithful to my church by clarifying our expectations of him at our next board meeting, making it perfectly clear that the board and not any one member has final say over the distribution of monies. Therefore he must conform or surrender the books.

If such an attitude is allowed to persist, the church board and pastor could be guilty of limiting the potential of our general church. Our district and general church depend solely on the support of the local church.

Pastor, your church's record is in essence your record. You must chart the course and then steer the ship. As grave as it may sound, this is our calling. I feel very strongly about the finances of our church, and regard them as a blood bank, supplying the needs of a great body.



BULLETIN EXCHANGE

The Miracle of the Manger

Let us look over the edge of that ancient animal-feeding rack. What see we? What is that little Form sleeping there? A Baby? Yes, and infinitely more! It is Mary's Baby. Yes, that is true, but yet much more! It is "the seed of the woman" (Gen. 3:15). It is Saviour of the world (Matt. 1:21). It is the Sovereign of the universe (Matt. 2:2; I Tim. 6:16).

Oh, let us sing! Oh, let us preach! Oh, let us worship! Oh, let us laugh and be utterly joyous and happy! Let us give gifts! Why? God made of a woman, made under the law, will soon come again! His second advent is at hand.

LAWRENCE B. HICKS
First Church, Ashland, Ky.

Season's Greetings

*I wish thee joy! much joy, around
this season;*

*Not "joys," but joy—deep and
strong and true;*

*Joy—inward joy, since surely heart
hath reason*

*To taste much joy where He hath
made things new.*

*I wish thee joy! the joy of sins
forgiven;*

*The joy which comes from having
Christ as thine;*

*The joy of knowing after earth
comes heaven—*

*Forevermore—the Father's house
divine.*

—J. DANSON SMITH
(*Message of the Cross*, December, 1967)

Mr. Malcolm Muggeridge says:

In an interview recently this great journalist said, "I don't believe there is any hope outside Christ for the western world from any quarter whatsoever. In 40 years of journalism I have come across no other hope."

His comments on institutional religion are just as penetrating. "Ecumenism reminds me of when I was a boy watching the pubs turn out at night. I have a vivid memory of about twenty people, all very drunk, and reeling out of the pub's doors. And they all had their arms round each other's shoulders, because if they didn't they would fall down. That, to me, is a perfect picture of ecumenism."

—Taken from the *Flame*

IT SOMETIMES HAPPENS . . .

*'Twas the night before Christmas and
all through the house*

*Not a creature was stirring 'cept Dad
and his spouse.*

*Their faces were haggard, all wrinkled
with care.*

*They looked at each other and sighed
in despair.*

Could they both be enjoying the presents they bought?

From the looks on their faces, we knew they were not.

It was simple to us what was causing their ills.

They were figuring out how to pay all those bills.

—Clearview News, Snohomish, Wash.
J. K. FRENCH, pastor

Greetings on a Gray but Glorious Day

The golden glow of the morning sun,
As it rises on Christmas morn,
Shines through the trees in the east,
The countryside to adorn.

Then the wind comes up from the north,
And the gusty clouds rise high.
The day turns gray from far away,
And the snow comes down from the sky.

It's the kind of a day to sit by the fire
While the embers warm and glow,
When your thoughts drift out to loved ones,
And the wonderful folk you know.

So we're writing our thoughts on paper
In order that we may say,
To all our loved ones and all our friends,
God bless you this Christmas Day!

JOHN STOCKTON
Kansas City, Mo.

Church Architecture

(Continued from page 16)

ern architectural idiom—the straight, clean, unaffected lines of the present day. The person who comes from a contemporary city or town in a 1968 auto to a building reminiscent of the European Middle Ages and listens to the reading of a Book in the archaic English of the seventeenth century, redolent of Shakespeare, might very well wonder if there is anything about this for the space age.

Through all our efforts to make our buildings bear witness to the truth, there is a “plus” we can count on. It is the mystique of the Spirit, the divine Presence that hallows and sanctifies the commonplace. In His power, we bear witness to the truth.

The end result of it all—praying, planning, paying, producing—is expressed in the prayer of William Cullen Bryant many years ago:

*Thou, whose unmeasured Temple stands
Built over earth and sea,
Accept the walls that human hands
Have raised, O God, to Thee.*

*And let the Comforter and Friend,
Thy Holy Spirit, meet
With those who here in worship bend
Before Thy mercy seat.*

*May they who err be guided here
To find the better way;
And they who mourn, and they who
fear,
Be strengthened as they pray.*

*May faith grow firm, and love grow
warm,
And pure devotion rise,
While round these hallowed walls the
storm
Of earth-born passion dies.*

Perfect Love

(Continued from page 36)

those who spitefully use us. It takes something more than human love to love our enemies, to be kind to our critics, and to be gracious to those who misunderstand us. Only God can impart to us such a love, and we can express it only as we live in constant communion with Him and place ourselves entirely under His control. The greatest need of the Church today is a baptism of holy love. It is also the greatest need of that part of the Church known as the “holiness” church. Correctness of doctrine and rigid adherence to rules are no substitute for the pure, burning, sacrificial, unchanging love of God filling the whole heart, finding expression in deep concern for the unsaved and gracious kindness and patience with fellow believers. May the fire of God's love burn perpetually on the altar of my heart! May it never go out! “That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them.” O Lord, answer this prayer in me.

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Salute to Our Evangelists

It sounds as if the following pastors are enthusiastic about their recent evangelists. These letters are spontaneous, unsolicited expressions of appreciation, one received by this editor and the others received by the Department of Evangelism, and are taken from the "Observer."

A TENNESSEE PASTOR WRITES:

"We have just completed our revival with Evangelist ——. As far as I am personally concerned, there is no one in the field of evangelism that does a church any more good than does this young man. His spirit and attitude about everything are top-notch. He never complains. He is always easy to keep, never fussing . . ."

AN OKLAHOMA PASTOR WRITES:

"Last Sunday our church closed a six-day revival. — was our evangelist. We are a small church and our finances are limited. We are averaging in the seventies in Sunday school and were able to pay only \$150. Yet, because God spoke definitely to him, he came.

"Our revival touched many new people, and brought people to our church who have never been here before. And revival is still on!

"The evangelist stayed with us in the parsonage. My wife and I received more help and spiritual guidance than we can say! The Lord used our evangelist to open our eyes and show us how our ministry could be dynamic rather than just ordinary. He helped us to see the importance of setting goals for our ministry, one of which is to be a 10 percent church. After our revival closed, my wife and I sat down and decided what we want, as far as our ministry is concerned, figured the price (in terms of time and effort), and with

God's help have set out to pay it. The revival was worth everything to us!"

A PASTOR FROM MICHIGAN WRITES:

"I AM CONVICTED.

"I am convicted by the person and preaching of the last three evangelists I've had in my church.

"Number one convinced me I needed to develop a more joyful attitude. Number two brought home to me the importance of more love in my spirit. Number three convicted me of the need for more pointed preaching in my ministry. All three by their spirit and preaching convinced me of needs in my own ministry.

"Yet with all their differences, these three evangelists were similar in many ways:

"1. They were all full-time in the field.

"2. They all put themselves at my disposal, willing to do anything to promote the revival.

"3. They all had a time of prayer and meditation in the morning.

"4. They were all married and missed their families.

"5. They were all a joy to entertain and a blessing to the parsonage.

"6. They were all recalled by the church.

"I would gladly give you their names, but must warn you that they are all slated full into 1970-71."

Pastor, is your church remembering to send a Christmas gift to the evangelists that have served you during the past year? Be generous with them, as your church is right now planning to be generous with you. Remember, their income stops through most of December—though not their outgo.

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